The Madonna of the Poets

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THIS ANTHOLOGY
OF POEMS IN OUR LADY'S PRAISE
HAS BEEN GATHERED BY
ANITA BARTLE

W. A. Mansell & Co.

PERUGINO

THE MADONNA OF THE POETS

THIS IS THAT BLESSED MARY PRE-ELECT
GOD'S VIRGIN

Dante Gabriel Rossetti

BURNS & OATES
28 Orchard Street London W
1908

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AFTER CAREFUL EXAMINATION, NEITHER AS ADVERSARY NOR AS FRIEND, OF THE INFLUENCES OF CATHOLICISM, I AM PERSUADED THAT THE WORSHIP OF THE MADONNA HAS BEEN ONE OF ITS NOBLEST & MOST VITAL GRACES, AND HAS NEVER BEEN OTHERWISE THAN PRODUCTIVE OF HOLINESS OF LIFE AND PURITY OF CHARACTER .... THERE HAS, PROBABLY, NOT BEEN AN INNOCENT HOME THROUGHOUT EUROPE DURING THE PERIOD OF CHRISTIANITY IN WHICH THE IMAGINED PRESENCE OF THE MADONNA HAS NOT GIVEN SANCTITY TO THE DUTIES, AND COMFORT TO THE TRIALS, OF THE LIVES OF WOMEN; AND EVERY BRIGHTEST AND LOFTIEST ACHIEVEMENT OF THE ART & STRENGTH OF MANHOOD HAS BEEN THE FULFILMENT OF THE POOR ISRAELITE MAIDEN'S: "HE THAT IS MIGHTY HATH MAGNIFIED ME."

JOHN RUSKIN

330485

TO
THE ARCHANGEL GABRIEL

The Madonna of the Poets

To our Blessed LORD

EVERY creature by Thee made
On Thy Birthday homage paid:—
Angels lent Thee hymn of praise,
Heaven, the star with silver rays;
Wise Men, incense, myrrh and gold;
Shepherds, wonder manifold;
Beasts, the manger, Earth, the cave—
We the Virgin-Mother gave.

ANONYMOUS

(*Trans. from the Greek by Rev. G. R. Woodward*)

The Mother of GOD

LADY Mary, Blissful Dame,
What shall be thy proper name?
Heaven? Forasmuch as He,
Sun of Justice, dawned in thee.
Paradise? Because thy bower
Grew the Everlasting Flower.
Maid? Because, withouten stain,
Virgin aye thou dost remain.
Is it *Mother Undefiled?*
Seeing that the Holy CHILD,
Whom thy spotless arms did bear,
GOD and LORD is everywhere.
Him, upon Him, prithee, call,
For to save us one and all.

ANONYMOUS

(*Trans. from the Greek by Rev. G. R. Woodward*)

JOHN MAUROPUS

Our Lady of the Passion

O LADY of the Passion, dost thou weep?
What help can we then through our tears survey,
If such as thou a cause for wailing keep?
What help, what hope, for us, sweet Lady, say?
"Good man, it doth befit thine heart to lay
More courage next it, having seen me so.
All other hearts find other balm to-day,—
The whole world's Consolation is my woe!"

JOHN MAUROPUS
(*Trans. from the Greek by E. B. Browning*)

A Little Song

MARY, Maiden, mild and free,
Chamber of the TRINITY,
A little while now list to me,
As greeting I thee give;
What though my heart unclean may be,
My offering yet receive!

Thou art the Queen of Paradise,
Of Heaven, of Earth, of all that is;
Thou bare in thee the King of Bliss
Without a spot or stain;
Thou didst put right what was amiss,
What man had lost, regain.

The gentle Dove of Noë thou art,
The Branch of Olive-tree that brought,
In token that a peace was wrought,
And man to GOD was dear:
Sweet Lady, be my Fort,
When the last fight draws near!

Thou art the Sling, thy Son the Stone
That David at Goliath flung;
Eke Aaron's Rod, whence blossom sprung,
Though bare it was and dry:
'Tis known to all, who've looked upon
Thy childbirth wondrous high!

ROBERT GROSSETESTE

In thee has GOD become a Child,
The wretched foe in thee is foiled;
That Unicorn that was so wild
  Is thrown by Woman chaste;
Him hast thou tamed, and forced to yield,
  With milk from Virgin breast.

Like as the sun full clear doth pass
Without a break through shining glass,
Thy Maidenhood unblemished was
  For bearing of thy LORD;
Now, sweetest Comfort of our race,
  To sinners be thou good!

Take, Lady dear, this little song
That out of sinful heart hath come!
Against the fiend now make me strong,
  Guide well my wandering soul:
And, though I once have done thee wrong,
  Forgive, and make me whole!

ROBERT GROSSETESTE
(*Modernized by F. M. Capes*)

To Mary

THOU Lily-leaf, thou Roseal-bud,
Thou Queen in City of our GOD,
Wherein ne'er trod
Maid like to thee, most high.
Thou Balm that every pain allays,
Thou Joy in harsh and bitter ways,
Honour and praise
Be thine eternally.
When that thy purest breast became
The living GODHEAD'S shrine,
As rays of sun through glass will flame,
Thou, in thy virginal chaste frame,
Most sweetly didst proclaim
CHRIST'S indwelling divine.

Thou Violet-field, thou Valley-rose,
Thou Bloom of budded hedge-rows,
Thou Heart's Repose,
Who makest Heaven glad;
Thou bright and Orient-beaming Morn,
Thou Truest Friend in lives forlorn—
Of thee is born
JESUS, the Living Bread,

That many darkened hearts and cold
Consumed and kindled be
In love's enchantments manifold,
And through love's potency consoled;
Thence be there told
For ever praise of thee.

Thou Blossom-gleam on clover-lea,
Thou burgeoned Spray of Aloe-tree,
Thou Bounteous Sea,
Whereon we gladly float;
Thou Sheltering Roof of all delight,
Inviolated by the night;
Thou Chamber Bright,
Whose splendour endeth not;
Thou helpful and thou Mighty Tower,
Before the face of hell—
When Satan comes in storm and power
With princes of the evil hour,
When passions rage and tempests lower,
Thou dost all terrors quell.

GOTTFRIED VON STRASBURG
(*Trans. by E. M. Sweetman*)

MADONNA of the POETS

Stabat Mater

STOOD the Maiden-Mother weeping,
By the Cross her sad watch keeping,
Near her dying Son and LORD;
Woes wherewith the heart is broken,
Sorrows never to be spoken,
Smote her, pierced her, like a sword.

O, with what vast griefs oppressèd
Bowed the more than woman blessèd,
Mother of GOD'S Only SON!
Oh, what bitterness came o'er her,
When the dread doom passed before her,
Seeing her Beloved undone!

Say, can any stand by tearless,
When so woe-begone and cheerless
Mourns the Virgin undefiled,
Or the rising anguish smother,
When he sees the tenderest mother
Suffer with her suffering Child?

Sacrifice for sins presented,
JESUS she beheld tormented,
For her people scourged and slain;
In His hour of desolation,
In the spirit's separation,
She beheld her Dear One's pain.

GIACOMO de BENEDETTI

Love's Pure Fountain, let me borrow
From thine anguish sense of sorrow;
  Make me, Mother, mourn with thee.
Be my heart's best offerings given
Evermore to CHRIST in Heaven;
  Let me His true servant be!

Holy Mother, draw me, win me;
Plant the Crucified within me;
  Brand His Wounds upon my heart!
For my sake thy Child was stricken;
With His Blood my spirit quicken;
  Half His agonies impart!

Let me feel thy sore affliction,
And my Master's Crucifixion
  Share, till life's last dawn appears;
So, with thee His Cross frequenting,
Daily would I kneel repenting,
  Meek companion of thy tears.

Virgin-Queen, renowned for ever,
Not from me thy sweetness sever;
  Bid me drink thy sorrow's cup,
Till my sympathizing spirit
All CHRIST'S bitter pangs inherit,
  All His bleeding Wounds count up.

Pierce me with my SAVIOUR'S piercings,
Let me taste the cross and cursings,
And for love the wine-press tread!
Through thy kindling inspiration,
Virgin, let me find salvation
In the doom of quick and dead!

Let CHRIST'S guardian Cross attend me,
And His saving Death defend me
Cradled in His arms of love!
When the body sleeps forsaken,
Mother, let my soul awaken
In GOD'S Paradise above!

GIACOMO DE BENEDETTI
(*Jacopone da Todi*)

ANONYMOUS

Carol

I SING of a Maiden
That is makeless;*
King of all kings
To her Son she ches.†
He came also‡ still
There His Mother was,
As dew in April
That falleth on the grass.
He came also still
To His Mother's bower,
As dew in April
That falleth on the flower.
He came also still
There His Mother lay,
As dew in April
That falleth on the spray.
Mother and maiden
Was never none but she;
Well may such a Lady
GOD'S Mother be.

ANONYMOUS

* Matchless. † Chose. ‡ As.

Quia Amore Langueo

THE VIRGIN'S COMPLAINT BECAUSE MAN'S SOUL IS WRAPPED IN SIN

WITHIN a chamber of a tower,
As musing on the moon stood I,
A Queen with honour crowned and power
Methought I saw, enthroned on high.
She made her plaint with bitter cry,
For soul of man by sin brought low:
I may not leave mankind to die,
Quia amore langueo.

I look for love of man my brother,
And plead for him in every guise,
His Mother I, who can no other,
Why should I my dear child despise?
Though he offend me divers wise
Through fleshly frailty falling so,
Yet must I rue until he rise,
Quia amore langueo.

I wait and bide with longing great;
I love and look till man shall crave;
I plain for pity of his state;
Would he ask grace 'twere his to have:
Call on me, Soul, thee will I save,
Child, bid me come, and I will go;
Thou ne'er didst pray, but I forgave,
Quia amore langueo.

ANONYMOUS

Mother of Mercy, I was made,
For thee who need'st it to illume:
More fain am I to grant its aid
Than thee to ask; why mute in gloom?
When said I nay? tell me to whom?
Ne'er yet, indeed, to friend or foe;
When ye ask not, I weep your doom,
Quia amore langueo.

O wretch on Earth, I look on thee
And see thee trespass day by day,
With sin against my purity,
With pride against my meek array:
My love thee waits, wrath is away;
My love thee calls; from me wilt go?
I prithee, sinner, to me pray,
Quia amore langueo.

My Son was outlawed for thy sin,
And scourged for trespasses of thine;
It pricks my heart so near my Kin
Should be so used. Ah, son of mine,
Thy Father is the SON benign
My breast hath fed; He loved thee so,
He died for thee; my heart is thine,
Quia amore langueo.

My Son hath suffered for thy love;
His heart was piercèd with a spear;
To bring thy soul to Heaven above
For love of thee so died He here.

Therefore thou art to me most dear,
Since my dear Son hath loved thee so;
Thou ne'er dost pray, but I thee hear,
Quia amore langueo.

My Son hath granted for thy sake
Each grace that I to ask am fain,
For He no vengeance wills to take,
If I for thee crave grace amain:
Then mercy ask, thou shalt obtain,
I with such ruth look on thy woe;
I long for mercy thou shouldst plain,
Quia amore langueo.

ANONYMOUS
(*Modernized by E. M. Clerke*)

The Seven Joys of Mary

THE first good joy that Mary had,
It was the joy of one ;
To see the Blessèd JESUS CHRIST,
When He was first her Son.
When He was first her Son, good LORD,
And happy may we be ;
Praise FATHER, SON, and HOLY GHOST
To all eternity.

The next good joy that Mary had,
It was the joy of two ;
To see her own Son, JESUS CHRIST,
Making the lame to go.
Making the lame to go, good LORD,
And happy may we be ;
Praise FATHER, SON, and HOLY GHOST
To all eternity.

The next good joy that Mary had,
It was the joy of three ;
To see her own Son, JESUS CHRIST,
Making the blind to see.
Making the blind to see, good LORD,
And happy may we be ;
Praise FATHER, SON, and HOLY GHOST
To all eternity.

The next good joy that Mary had,
It was the joy of four ;
To see her own Son, JESUS CHRIST,
Reading the Bible o'er.
Reading the Bible o'er, good LORD,
And happy may we be ;
Praise FATHER, SON, and HOLY GHOST
To all eternity.

The next good joy that Mary had,
It was the joy of five;
To see her own Son, JESUS CHRIST,
Raising the dead alive.
Raising the dead alive, good LORD,
And happy may we be ;
Praise FATHER, SON, and HOLY GHOST
To all eternity.

The next good joy that Mary had,
It was the joy of six ;
To see her own Son, JESUS CHRIST,
Upon the crucifix.
Upon the crucifix, good LORD;
And happy may we be ;
Praise FATHER, SON, and HOLY GHOST
To all eternity.

The next good joy that Mary had,
It was the joy of seven;
To see her own Son, JESUS CHRIST,
Ascending into Heaven.
Ascending into Heaven, good LORD,
And happy may we be;
Praise FATHER, SON, and HOLY GHOST
To all eternity.

ANONYMOUS

The Virgin and Child

ON yesternight I saw a sight,
A star as bright as day;
And all along I heard a song,
Lullay, by by, lullay.

A lovely Lady sat and sang,
And to her Child she spake;
"My Son, my Brother, Father dear,
It makes my heart to ache
To see Thee there
So cold and bare,
A King upon this hay;
But hush Thy wail,
I will not fail
To sing by by, lullay."

The Child then spake whilst she did sing,
And to the Maiden said,
"Right sure I am a mighty King,
Though is a crib My bed;
For Angels bright
Down to Me light;
Thou canst not say Me nay;
Then why so sad?
Thou mayst be glad
To sing by by, lullay."

ANONYMOUS

"Now, sweetest LORD, since Thou art King,
Why liest Thou in a stall?
Why didst Thou not Thy cradle bring
To some great royal hall?
Methinks 'tis right
That king or knight
Should lie in good array;
And them among
It were no wrong
To sing by by, lullay."

"My Mother Mary, thine I be,
Though I be laid in stall,
Both lords and dukes shall worship Me,
And so shall monarchs all:
Ye shall well see
That Princes Three
Shall come on the twelfth day.
Then let Me rest
Upon thy breast
And sing by by, lullay."

"Now tell me, sweetest LORD, I pray,
Thou art my Love and Dear,
How shall I nurse Thee to Thy mind,
And make Thee glad of cheer?
For all Thy will
I would fulfil,
I need no more to say;
And for all this
I will Thee kiss,
And sing by by, lullay."

"My Mother dear, when time it be,
  Then take Me up aloft,
And set Me up upon thy knee,
  And handle Me full soft;
    And in thy arm
    Thou wilt Me warm,
  And keep Me night and day:
    And if I weep,
    And may not sleep,
  Thou sing by by, lullay."

"Now, sweetest LORD, since it is so,
  That Thou art most of might,
I pray Thee grant a boon to me,
  If it be meet and right;
    That child or man
    That will or can
  Be merry on this day;
    To bliss them bring,
    And I shall sing,
  Lullay, by by, lullay."

ANONYMOUS
(*Modernized by Rev. H. R. Bramley*)

The Seven Virgins

ALL under the leaves, and the leaves of life,
I met with virgins seven,
And one of them was Mary mild,
Our LORD'S Mother of Heaven.

"O what are you seeking, you seven fair maids,
All under the leaves of life?
Come tell, come tell, what seek you
All under the leaves of life?"

"We're seeking for no leaves, Thomas,
But for a friend of thine;
We're seeking for sweet JESUS CHRIST,
To be our guide and Thine."

"Go down, go down, to yonder town,
And sit in the gallery,
And there you'll see sweet JESUS CHRIST
Nailed to a big yew-tree."

So down they went to yonder town
As fast as foot could fall,
And many a grievous bitter tear
From the Virgin's eye did fall.

"O peace, Mother, O peace, Mother,
Your weeping doth Me grieve;
I must suffer this," He said,
"For Adam and for Eve."

"O Mother, take you John Evangelist,
All for to be your son,
And he will comfort you sometimes,
Mother, as I have done."

"O, come thou, John Evangelist,
Thou'rt welcome unto me;
But more welcome my own dear Son,
Whom I nursed on my knee."

Then He laid His head on His right shoulder,
Seeing Death it struck Him nigh,—
"The HOLY GHOST be with your soul,
I die, Mother dear, I die."

O the rose, the gentle rose,
And the fennel that grows so green!
GOD give us grace in every place
To pray for our King and Queen.

Furthermore for our enemies all
Our prayers they should be strong:
Amen, good LORD. Your charity
Is the ending of my song.

ANONYMOUS

De Assumptione

OF her pure life double is there none,
For she of women was alone
In childing Child as erst before;
She was a maiden evermore,
She suckled CHRIST with her sweet breast,
And now in Heaven assumpta est;

Where with her Son she is indued
With joys of passing magnitude,
Above all Angels, next the Throne,
For her virtues that so high shone,
No Angel so with grace possest;
And now in Heaven assumpta est,

In flesh to live as she did here,
No fleshly lust in her t'appear;
It was a life angelical,
Beyond the life of Angels all,
For their number by her increased,
And now in Heaven assumpta est.

Though some doth hold the contrary,
She in the earth to putrify,
Her flesh and CHRIST'S, sith both be one,
That were no good condition:
No doubt He did as seemèd best,
Therefore in Heaven assumpta est.

In things that reason cannot prove,
We ought CHRIST'S Church for to believe,
Which holdeth she, soul and body,
To be assumpte most certainly.
Of long is held from East to West,
With whom I hold, assumpta est.

If Saints in their bodies did rise,
When CHRIST arose, and did certise
His Resurrection to be true,
And did with Him to Heaven ensue,
Dying again their death-curst drest,
Then she (as they) assumpta est.

Her reliques if in earth being,
They should have had some mentioning,
As Saint John's head at Amyas;
And other Saints, each in their place;
She passing all, with grace possest,
No doubt in Heaven assumpta est.

Her honour since that did excel
Far passing all any can tell;
To GOD'S own SON to be Mother,
To have then that hath none other,
Her soul in body now to rest,
And in the same assumpta est.

In both or any of the twain,
Sith never sin did move or reign,
And sin of old compaction
Cause of all putrefaction,
They the most singularly blest,
  In singular wise assumpta est.

That womb in which GOD'S SON did lie,
Receiving flesh, blood and body,
With pappes blest, as Luke doth say,
Although to have a dying day,
To turn to dust had not been best,
  Therefore I say assumpta est.

Whether or not to stand in doubt
Enough we have here bolted out;
Let them that list on their peril;
Well am I sure GOD did fulfil
For His Mother that seemèd best,
  Therefore I say assumpta est.

To Thee, O GOD, O FATHER of Might,
To SON, and to the HOLY SPRITE,
That art ONE GOD in TRINITY,
For her graces all praisings be,
Who grant to us, at her request,
  To come where she assumpta est.

WILLIAM FORREST

The Virgin's Salutation

SPELL Eva back, and Ave shall you find;
The first began, the last reversed our harms;
An Angel's witching words did Eva blind,
An Angel's Ave disenchants the charms:
Death first by woman's weakness entered in,
In woman's virtue Life doth now begin. . . .

ROBERT SOUTHWELL

Our Blessed Lady's Lullaby

UPON my lap my Sovereign sits,
And sucks upon my breast;
Meanwhile His love sustains my life,
And gives my body rest.
Sing lullaby, my little Boy,
Sing lullaby, my life's Joy!

When Thou hast taken Thy repast,
Repose, my Babe, on me;
So may Thy Mother and Thy nurse
Thy cradle also be.
Sing lullaby, my little Boy,
Sing lullaby, my life's Joy!

I grieve that duty doth not work
All that my wishing would,
Because I would not be to Thee
But in the best I should.
Sing lullaby, my little Boy,
Sing lullaby, my life's Joy!

Yet as I am, and as I may,
I must and will be Thine,
Though all too little for Thyself
Vouchsafing to be mine.
Sing lullaby, my little Boy,
Sing lullaby, my life's Joy!

My wits, my words, my deeds, my thoughts,
And else what is in me,
I rather will not wish to use
If not in serving Thee.
Sing lullaby, my little Boy,
Sing lullaby, my life's Joy!

My Babe, my Bliss, my Child, my Choice,
My Fruit, my Flower and Bud;
My JESUS, and my only Joy,
The Sum of all my good.
Sing lullaby, my little Boy,
Sing lullaby, my life's Joy!

My Sweetness, and the Sweetest most
That Heaven could Earth deliver;
Soul of my love, Spirit of my life,
Abide with me for ever.
Sing lullaby, my little Boy,
Sing lullaby, my life's Joy!

Live still with me, and be my Love,
And Death will me refrain;
Unless Thou let me die with Thee,
To live with Thee again.
Sing lullaby, my little Boy,
Sing lullaby, my life's Joy!

Leave now to wail, thou luckless wight,
That wrought'st thy race's woe;
Redress is found, and foilèd is
Thy fruit-alluring foe.
Sing lullaby, my little Boy,
Sing lullaby, my life's Joy!

Thy fruit of Death from Paradise
Made Thee exilèd mourn;
My Fruit of Life to Paradise
Makes joyful Thy return.
Sing lullaby, my little Boy,
Sing lullaby, my life's Joy!

Grow up, good Fruit, be nourisht by
These fountains two of me,
That only flow with maiden's-milk,
The only meat for Thee.
Sing lullaby, my little Boy,
Sing lullaby, my life's Joy!

The Earth is now a Heaven become,
And this base bower of mine
A princely palace unto me,
My Son doth make to shine.
Sing lullaby, my little Boy,
Sing lullaby, my life's Joy!

His sight gives clearness to my sight,
When waking I Him see;
And sleeping, His mild countenance
Gives favour unto me.
Sing lullaby, my little Boy,
Sing lullaby, my life's Joy!

When I Him in my arms embrace,
I feel my heart embraced,
Ev'n by the inward grace of His,
Which He in me hath placed.
Sing lullaby, my little Boy,
Sing lullaby, my life's Joy!

And when I kiss His loving lips,
Then His sweet-smelling breath
Doth yield a favour to my soul,
That feeds Love, Hope and Faith.
Sing lullaby, my little Boy,
Sing lullaby, my life's Joy!

The shepherds left their keeping sheep,
For joy to see my Lamb;
How may I more rejoice to see
Myself to be the Dam.
Sing lullaby, my little Boy,
Sing lullaby, my life's Joy!

Three Kings their treasures hither brought
Of incense, myrrh and gold,
The Heaven's Treasure and the King
That here they might behold.
Sing lullaby, my little Boy,
Sing lullaby, my life's Joy!

One sort an Angel did direct;
A star did guide the other;
And all the fairest Son to see
That ever had a mother.
Sing lullaby, my little Boy,
Sing lullaby, my life's Joy!

This sight I see, this Child I have,
This Infant I embrace,
O endless Comfort of the earth,
And Heaven's eternal Grace.
Sing lullaby, my little Boy,
Sing lullaby, my life's Joy!

Thee Sanctity herself doth serve;
Thee Goodness doth attend;
Thee Blessedness doth wait upon,
And Virtues all commend.
Sing lullaby, my little Boy,
Sing lullaby, my life's Joy!

Great kings and prophets wishèd have,
To see that I possess;
Yet wish I never Thee to see,
If not in thankfulness.
Sing lullaby, my little Boy,
Sing lullaby, my life's Joy!

Let Heaven, and Earth, and Saints, and men,
Assistance give to me,
That all their most occurring aid
Augment my thanks to Thee.
Sing lullaby, my little Boy,
Sing lullaby, my life's Joy!

And let th' ensuing blessèd race
Thou wilt succeeding raise,
Join all their praises unto mine
To multiply Thy praise.
Sing lullaby, my little Boy.
Sing lullaby, my life's Joy!

And take my service well in worth
And Joseph's here with me,
Who of my husband bears the name,
Thy servant for to be.
Sing lullaby, my little Boy,
Sing lullaby, my life's Joy!

RICHARD ROWLANDS
(*Verstegen*)

W. A. Mansell & Co.

BOTTICELLI

The Virgin Mary

FOR that fair blessèd mother-maid,
Whose flesh redeemed us, the She-Cherubin,
Which unlocked paradise, and made
One claim for innocence, and disseizèd sin,
Whose womb was a strange heaven, for there
GOD clothed Himself and grew,
Our zealous thanks we pour. As her deeds were
Our helps, so are her prayers; nor can she sue
In vain, who hath such titles unto you.

JOHN DONNE

Annunciation

SALVATION to all that will, is nigh;
That All, which always is all everywhere,
Which cannot sin, and yet all sins must bear,
Which cannot die, yet cannot choose but die,
Lo! faithful Virgin, yields Himself to lie
In prison, in thy womb; and though He there
Can take no sin, nor thou give, yet He'll wear,
Taken from thence, flesh, which Death's force may try.
Ere by the spheres time was created, thou
Wast in His mind, Who is thy Son, and Brother;
Whom thou conceivest, conceived; yea, thou art now
Thy MAKER'S maker, and thy FATHER'S mother.
Thou hast light in dark, and shutt'st in little room
Immensity, cloistered in thy dear womb.

JOHN DONNE

Daughter, Mother, Spouse of GOD

DAUGHTER, and Mother, and the Spouse of GOD,
Alike of kin, to that most blessèd TRINE
Of PERSONS, yet in union ONE DIVINE,
How are thy gifts and graces blazed abroad!

Most holy, and pure Virgin, blessèd Maid,
Sweet Tree of Life, king David's Strength and Tower,
The House of Gold, the Gate of Heaven's power,
The Morning-Star whose light our fall hath stayed.

Great Queen of queens, most mild, most meek, most wise,
Most Venerable, Cause of all our joy,
Whose cheerful look our sadness doth destroy,
And art the Spotless Mirror to man's eyes.

The Seat of Sapience, the most lovely Mother,
And most to be admirèd of thy sex,
Who made us happy all, in thy reflex,
By bringing forth GOD'S Only SON, no other.

Thou Throne of Glory, beauteous as the moon,
The rosy morning, or the rising sun,
Who like a giant hastes his course to run,
Till he hath reached his twofold point of noon.

MADONNA of the POETS

How are thy gifts and graces blazed abroad
Through all the lines of this circumference,
T' imprint in all purged hearts this virgin sense
Of being daughter, mother, spouse of GOD!

BEN JONSON

Sir JOHN BEAUMONT

The Assumption

WHO is she that ascends so high,
Next the Heavenly KING,
Round about whom Angels fly
And her praises sing?

Who is she that, adorned with light,
Makes the sun her robe,
At whose feet the queen of night
Lays her changing globe?

To that crown direct thine eye,
Which her head attires;
There thou mayst her name discry
Writ in starry fires.

This is she in whose pure womb
Heaven's Prince remained;
Therefore, in no earthly tomb
Can she be contained.

Heaven she was, which held that fire,
Whence the world took light,
And to Heaven doth now aspire
Flames with flames t'unite.

She that did so clearly shine
When our day begun,
See how bright her beams decline
Now she sits with the SUN.

The Virgin Mary

TO work a wonder GOD would have her shown
At once a Bud and yet a Rose full-blown.

ROBERT HERRICK

Ana {MARY / ARMY} gram

HOW well her name an *Army* doth present
In whom the LORD of HOSTS did pitch his tent.

GEORGE HERBERT

The Hymn "O Gloriosa Domina"

HAIL, most high, most humble one!
Above the world, below thy Son,
Whose blush the moon beauteously mars
And stains the tim'rous light of stars.
He that made all things had not done
Till He had made Himself thy Son.
The whole world's Host would be thy guest
And board Himself at thy rich breast.
O boundless hospitality,
The Feast of all things feeds on thee!
The first Eve, mother of our fall,
Ere she bore any one slew all.
Of her unkind gift might we have
Th' inheritance of a hasty grave;
Quick buried in the wanton tomb
Of one forbidden bit,
Had not a Better Fruit forbidden it;
Had not thy healthful womb
The world's new Eastern window been,
And given us Heav'n again in giving Him.
Thine was the rosy dawn that sprung the day
Which renders all the stars she stole away.
Let then th' aged world be wise, and all
Prove nobly, here, unnatural:
'Tis gratitude to forget that other,
And call the Maiden Eve their Mother.

Ye redeemed nations far and near,
Applaud your happy selves in her
(All you to whom this love belongs),
And keep 't alive with lasting songs.
Let hearts and lips speak loud and say,
Hail, Door of Life and Source of Day!
The door was shut, the fountain sealed,
Yet light was seen and life revealed;
The fountain sealed, yet life found way.
Glory to Thee, great Virgin's SON,
In bosom of Thy FATHER'S bliss!
The same to Thee, sweet SPIRIT, be done,
As ever shall be, was, and is!

RICHARD CRASHAW

Sancta Maria Dolorum

OR, THE MOTHER OF SORROWS; A PATHETICAL DESCANT UPON THE DEVOUT PLAINSONG OF STABAT MATER DOLOROSA

IN shade of Death's Sad Tree
Stood doleful She;
Ah, She! now by none other
Name to be known, alas! but Sorrow's Mother.
Before her eyes
Hers and the whole world's Joys,
Hanging, all torn, she sees, and in His woes
And pains her pangs and throes.
Each wound of His from every part
All more at home in her own heart.

What kind of marble, then,
Is that cold man
Who can look on and see,
Nor keep such noble sorrows company?
Sure even from you,
My flints, some drops are due,
To see so many unkind swords contest
So fast for one soft breast;
While with a faithful, mutual flood
Her eyes bleed tears, His Wounds weep blood!

O costly intercourse
Of deaths, and worse,
Divided loves; while Son and Mother
Discourse alternate wounds to one another!
Quick deaths that grow
And gather, as they come and go;
His nails write swords in her; which soon her heart
Pays back, with more than their own smart;
Her swords, still growing with His pain,
Turn spears, and straight come home again.

She sees her Son, her GOD,
Bow with a load
Of borrowed sins, and swim
In woes that were not made for Him.
Ah! hard command
Of love! here must she stand,
Charged to look on, and with a steadfast eye
See her Life die;
Leaving her only so much breath
As serves to keep alive her death.

O Mother Turtle-dove!
Soft Source of Love!
That these dry lids might borrow
Something from thy full seas of sorrow!

O, in that breast
Of thine (the noblest nest
Both of Love's fires and floods) might I recline
This hard, cold heart of mine!
The chill lump would relent, and prove
Soft subject for the siege of Love!

O, teach those wounds to bleed
In me; me, so to read
This book of loves, thus writ
In lines of death; my life may copy it
With loyal cares.
O, let me here claim shares!
Yield something in thy sad prerogative,
Great Queen of Griefs, and give
Me to my tears; who, though all stone,
Think much that thou should'st mourn alone.

Yea, let my life and me
Fix here with thee,
And at the humble foot
Of this Fair Tree take our eternal root,
That so we may
At least be in Love's way;
And in these chaste wars, while the winged
wounds flee
So fast 'twixt Him and thee,
My breast may catch the kiss of some kind dart,
Though as at second hand, from either heart.

O you, your own best darts,
Dear doleful hearts!
Hail, and strike home, and make me see
That wounded bosoms their own weapons be!
Come wounds! come darts!
Nailed hands! and piercèd hearts!
Come, your whole selves, Sorrow's great Son and Mother,
Nor grudge a younger brother
Of griefs his portion, who (had all their due)
One single wound should not have left for you.

Shall I set there
So deep a share,
Dear wounds! and only now
In sorrows draw no dividend with you?
O, be more wise,
If not more soft, mine eyes!
Flow, tardy founts! and into decent show'rs
Dissolve my days and hours:
And if thou yet, faint soul, defer
To bleed with Him, fail not to weep with her.

Rich Queen, lend some relief,
At least an alms of grief,
To a heart, who, by sad right of sin,
Could prove the whole sum, too sure, due to him.

By all those stings
Of love, sweet bitter things,
Which these torn hands transcribed on thy true heart;
O, teach mine too the art
To study Him so, till we mix
Wounds, and become one crucifix.

O, let me suck the wine
So long of this Chaste Vine,
Till, drunk of the dear wounds, I be
A lost thing to the world, as it to me!
O Faithful Friend
Of me, and of my end!
Fold up my life in love, and lay't beneath
My dear LORD'S vital death.
Lo, heart, thy hope's whole plea! her precious breath,
Poured out in prayer for thee; thy LORD'S in death.

RICHARD CRASHAW

On the Blessed Virgin's Bashfulness

THAT on her lap she casts her humble eye,
'Tis the sweet pride of her humility.
The fair star is well fixt, for where, O where
Could she have fixt it on a fairer sphere?
'Tis Heav'n, 'tis Heav'n she sees, Heav'n's GOD there lies;
She can see Heaven, and ne'er lift up her eyes;
This new Guest to her eyes new laws hath given,
'Twas once look up, 'tis now look down to Heaven.

RICHARD CRASHAW

On the Glorious Assumption of the Blessed Virgin

HARK! She is called, the parting hour is come;
Take thy farewell, poor world, Heaven must go home.
A Piece of Heavenly Light, purer and brighter
Than the chaste stars, whose choice lamps come to light her,
While through the crystal orbs, clearer than they,
She climbs, and makes a far more Milky Way.
She's called again! hark! how th'immortal DOVE
Sighs to its Silver Mate: "Rise up, my Love,
Rise up, my Fair, my Spotless One!
The winter's past, the rain is gone:
The spring is come, the flowers appear,
No sweets, since thou are wanting here.

"Come away, my Love;
Come away, my Dove;
Cast off delay:
The court of Heav'n is come,
To wait upon thee home;
Come away, come away."

She's called again! and will she go?
When Heav'n bids come, who can say no?
Heav'n calls her, and she must away;
Heav'n will not, and she cannot stay.
Go, then, go, Glorious, on the golden wings
Of the bright youth of Heav'n, that sings
Under so sweet a Burden: go,
Since thy great Son will have it so;
And while thou go'st, our song and we
Will, as we may, reach after thee.
Hail! Holy Queen of Humble Hearts,
We in thy praise will have our parts;
And though thy dearest looks must now be light
To none but the blest Heavens, whose bright
Beholders, lost in sweet delight,
Feed for ever their fair sight
With those divinest eyes, which we
And our dark world no more shall see;
Though our poor joys are parted so,
Yet shall our lips never let go
Thy gracious name, but to the last
Our loving song shall hold it fast.

Thy sacred name shall be
Thyself to us, and we
With holy cares will keep it by us;
We to the last
Will hold it fast,
And no Assumption shall deny us.

All the sweetest showers
Of our fairest flowers
Will we strew upon it:
Though our sweetness cannot make
It sweeter, they may take
Themselves new sweetness from it.

Maria, men and Angels sing,
Maria, Mother of our King!
Live, Rarest Princess! and O, may the bright
Crown of a most incomparable light
Embrace thy radiant brows! O, may the best
Of everlasting joys bathe thy white breast!
Live, our Chaste Love, the Holy Mirth
Of Heaven, and humble Pride of Earth!
Live, Crown of Women, Queen of Men:
Live, Mistress of our Song; and when
Our weak desires have done their best,
Sweet Angels, come, and sing the rest!

RICHARD CRASHAW

The Knot

BRIGHT Queen of Heaven! GOD'S Virgin Spouse!
The glad world's Blessèd Maid!
Whose beauty tied life to thy house,
And brought us saving aid.

Thou art the true Love's-knot; by thee
GOD is made our ally;
And man's inferior essence He
With His did dignify.

For coalescent by that Band
We are His body grown,
Nourished with favours from His hand
Whom for our Head we own.

And such a Knot what arm dares loose,
What life, what death can sever?
Which us in Him, and Him in us,
United keeps for ever.

HENRY VAUGHAN

Stabat Mater Dolorosa

UNDER the world-redeeming Rood
The most afflicted Mother stood,
Mingling her tears with her Son's Blood.

As that streamed down from every part,
Of all His Wounds she felt the smart:
What pierced His Body pierced her heart.

Who can with tearless eyes look on
While such a Mother, such a Son,
Wounded and gasping, does bemoan?

O worse than Jewish heart, that could
Unmoved behold the double flood
Of Mary's tears and JESUS' Blood!

Alas! our sins they were, not His,
In this atoning sacrifice,
For which He bleeds, for which He dies.

When graves did open, rocks were rent,
When nature and each element
His torments and her grief resent,

Shall man (the cause of all His pain
And all her grief), shall sinful man
Alone insensible remain?

Ah! Pious Mother, teach my heart
Of sighs and tears the holy art;
And in thy grief to bear a part.

That sword of grief which did pass through
Thy very soul, O, may it now
One kind wound on my heart bestow!

Great Queen of Sorrows, in thy train
Let me a mourner's place obtain,
With tears to cleanse all sinful stain.

To heal the leprosy of sin
We must the cure with tears begin;
All flesh corrupts without their brine.

Refuge of Sinners! grant that we
May tread thy steps, and let it be
Our sorrow not to grieve like thee.

O, may the Wounds of thy dear Son
Our contrite hearts possess alone,
And all terrene affections drown!

These Wounds, which now the stars outshine,
Those furnaces of love divine,
May they our drossy souls refine!

And on us such impressions make
That we, of suffering for His sake,
May joyfully our portion take!

Let us His proper badge put on.
Let's glory in the Cross alone
By which He marks us for His own !

That when the Last Assizes come,
For every man to hear his doom,
On His Right Hand we may find room.

Oh, hear us, Mary ! JESUS, hear
Our humble prayers, secure our fear,
When Thou in Judgement shalt appear !

Now give us sorrow, give us love,
That so prepared we may remove,
When called from this to the blest world above.

ANONYMOUS

Reunion of the Soul and Body of the Blessed Virgin Mary

THUS far immersed in this divine abyss
Of melting raptures and transporting bliss,
Purely dissolved into the heavenly line,
She was no more herself, but all divine;
Yet could not banish from her tender mind
Her dear co-partner sleeping still behind.
Their former strong alliance forced her love,
She sweetly mourned as does the turtle-dove
With melting sighs the absence of her love.
For this bright spotless pair were so secure
From any blemish, so divinely pure,
That GOD himself did prove her flesh might be
A rival to her soul in purity:
And most deservedly—for if it's fit
T' examine titles her soul must submit.
For when His Incarnation did begin,
He chose her flesh to veil His GODHEAD in;
Nor did her heavenly soul all this deny
Though bathing in the stream of heavenly joy.
She loved her lonely partner left behind,
And wished each moment they might be rejoined,
Seeing so many radiant bodies shine
Of glorious Saints with rays of light divine;

More yet—the immortal members of her Son,
And well remembered when e'er they had begun:
And though she shone with light divinely clear,
Yet to herself she naked did appear,
And wished, and wished her friendly flesh was there.
And now she speaks : " Behold I am (says she)
Both Spouse and Daughter to the DEITY ;
A triple emblem my bright soul does wear,
Wherein my great CREATOR'S Image does appear:
Memory, Knowledge, and Seraphic Love,
The FATHER, SON, and SEMPITERNAL DOVE.
But did I bear the Infant DEITY,
Or help to clothe Him with humanity,
Or ever lull the little GOD to rest,
Stealing into His little mouth the welcome breast ?
No, no ; 'twas my dear flesh performed that part,
And always bore a tender mother's heart ;
And when He slept, she'd take a careful nod
And sweetly slumber o'er the Infant GOD.
Thrice happy body, slumb'ring in thy tomb,
That bear'st mankind's Salvation in thy womb!
My poor endowments, when I think on thee,
How undeserving they appear to me!
What's Memory, or Knowledge, or what's Love—
Shall I alone be crowned a Queen above,
Whilst you, my dear co-partner, lie alone,
Shut in the horrors of the vaulted stone,
Who so much more than I deserve a throne ?

But our CREATOR, though He's good to me,
Will yet, without all doubt, be just to thee!" . . . .

Immediately the heavens began to shake,
Yet all were hush when their CREATOR spake.
He spoke: then all with one consent did bow
With all the glorious Spirits there, and now
The joyful orbs began again to roll,
And shouts of joy were heard from pole to pole.
The ETERNAL nods, and all the signal take;
A glorious sight the glittering Seraphs make.
Legions of Angels fill the ambient air,
Myriads of Cherubs to attend the Fair ;
All in an instant into order stepped,
Extending from the Throne to where she slept.
A radiant path behind, and on each side a line
Which like so many dazzling suns did shine.
All ready now, she does the signal give,
And with a lingering embrace she takes her leave ;
And now descends her partner to release,
Attended by the Harbingers of Love and Peace.
And now behold on wing the Heavenly Fair
As swift as meditation cuts the yielding air :
Her hymning guard sang anthems all the way,
The spheres made music, too, as well as they,
And all the elements were bright and gay ;
The clattering orbs a clamorous joy exprest,
And universal nature now again was blest.

By soft dimission, lo, the Charmer's come,
And like a dove alights upon the tomb :
Re-enters her dear body, and the twain
Embrace, but never now to part again.
Immortal vows their juncture, which no time
Can e'er dissolve : to think it were a crime.

JOSEPH REEVE

The Virgin

MOTHER! whose virgin bosom was uncrost
With the least shade of thought to sin allied;
Woman! above all women glorified,
Our tainted nature's Solitary Boast;
Purer than foam on central ocean tost;
Brighter than eastern skies at daybreak strewn
With fancied roses, than the unblemished moon
Before her wane begins on heaven's blue coast;
Thy image falls to earth. Yet some, I ween,
Not unforgiven the suppliant knee might bend,
As to a visible power, in which did blend
All that was mixed and reconciled in thee
Of mother's love with maiden purity,
Of high with low, celestial with terrene!

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

Candlemas

THE Angel-lights of Christmas morn,
Which shot across the sky,
Away they pass at Candlemas,
They sparkle and they die.

Comfort of earth is brief at best,
Although it be divine.
Like funeral lights for Christmas gone
Old Simeon's tapers shine.

And then for eight long weeks and more,
We wait in twilight grey,
Till the high candle sheds a beam
On Holy Saturday.

We wait along the penance-tide
Of solemn fast and prayer;
While song is hushed, and lights grow dim
In the sin-laden air.

And while the sword in Mary's soul
Is driven home, we hide
In our own hearts, and count the wounds
Of passion and of pride.

And still, though Candlemas be spent
And Alleluias o'er,
Mary is music in our need,
And JESUS light in store.

King Arthur's Waes-Hael

WAES-HAEL for knight and dame!
O merry be there dole!
Drink-hael! in JESU'S name
We fill the tawny bowl;
But cover down the curving crest,
Mould of the Orient Lady's breast.

Waes-hael! yet lift no lid;
Drain ye the reeds for wine.
Drink-hael! the milk was hid
That soothed that Babe divine;
Hushed, as this hollow channel flows,
He drew the balsam from the Rose.

Waes-hael! thus glowed the breast
Where a GOD yearned to cling;
Drink-hael! so JESU pressed
Life from its mystic spring;
Then hush and bend in reverent sign,
And breathe the thrilling reeds for wine.

Waes-hael! in shadowy scene
Lo! Christmas children we:
Drink-hael! behold we lean
At a far Mother's knee;
To dream that thus her bosom smiled,
And learn the lip of Bethlehem's Child.

ROBERT STEPHEN HAWKER

A Canticle for Christmas

LO! a pure Maiden, meek and mild,
Yearns to embrace an Awful Child!
Those limbs, her tenderest touch might win:
Yet thrill they with the GOD within!

She gazes! and what doth she see?
A gleaming Infant on her knee!
She pauses: can she dare to press
That Glory with a fond caress?

Yet 'tis her flesh: that Form so fair!
Her very blood is bounding there!
The mother's heart the victory won
It is her GOD! it is her Son!

Hers the proud gladness mothers know,
Without a thrill, without a throe:
And Mary—Mary undefiled
Claims for her breast that Awful Child.

ROBERT STEPHEN HAWKER

Aishah Schechinah

A SHAPE, like folded light, embodied air,
Yet wreathed with flesh, and warm;
All that of Heaven is feminine and fair,
Moulded in visible form.

She stood, the Lady Schechinah of Earth,
A chancel for the sky;—
Where woke, to breath and beauty, GOD'S own birth,
For men to see Him by.

Round her, too pure to mingle with the day,
Light, that was Life, abode;
Folded within her fibres meekly lay
The link of boundless GOD.

So linked, so blent, that when, with pulse fulfilled,
Moved but that infant Hand,
Far, far away, His conscious GODHEAD thrilled,
And stars might understand.

Lo! where they pause, with intergathering rest,
The THREEFOLD and the ONE!
And lo! He binds them to her Orient breast,
His Manhood girded on.

The Zone, where two glad worlds for ever meet,
  Beneath that bosom ran:—
Deep in that womb, the conquering PARACLETE
  Smote GODHEAD on to man!

Sole scene among the stars, where, yearning, glide
  The THREEFOLD and the ONE:
Her GOD upon her lap, the Virgin-Bride,
  Her awful Child: her Son.

ROBERT STEPHEN HAWKER

DEI Genitrix

I SEE Him: on thy lap He lies
'Mid that Judæan stable's gloom:
O sweet, O awful Sacrifice!
He smiles in sleep, yet knows the doom.

Thou gav'st Him life! But was not this
That life which knows no parting breath?
Unmeasured Life? unwaning Bliss?
Dread Priestess, lo! thou gav'st Him Death!

Beneath the tree thy mother stood;
Beneath the Cross thou too shalt stand:—
O Tree of Life! O bleeding Rood!
Thy shadow stretches far its hand.

That GOD Who made the sun and moon,
In swaddling bands lies dumb and bound—
Love's Captive! darker prison soon
Awaits thee in the garden ground.

He wakens. Paradise looks forth
Beyond the portals of the grave.
Life, life thou gavest!—Life to Earth,
Not Him. Thine Infant dies to save!

AUBREY DE VERE

W. A. Mansell & Co.

FILIPPO LIPPI

Beati qui audiunt Verbum DEI

WHEN from the crowd that voice was raised
That blessed the Mother of the LORD,
Not her the Son who loved her praised,
But all who heard and kept His word.

O answer meet! to her how dear,
To her too great her crown to boast!
The meek was glad that praise to hear:
The meekest, loftiest, joyed the most.

Above her soul's pure mirror crept
No mist; no doubt within her stirred:
She asked not, "Who His words hath kept,
Like her the Mother of the WORD?"

Her tender heart rejoiced to think
That all who say, "Thy will be mine,"
Without, or with the external link,
In heart bring forth the Babe divine. . . . .

AUBREY DE VERE

Mater Divinæ Gratiæ

"THEY have no wine." The Tender Guest
Was grieved their feast should lack for aught:
He seemed to slight her mute request:
Not less the grace she wished He wrought.

O Great in Love! O Full in Grace!
That winds in thee, a river broad,
From CHRIST, with heaven-reflecting face,
Gladdening the City of thy GOD:—

Be this thy gift: that man henceforth
No more should creep through life content
(Draining the springs impure of earth)
With life's material element.

Let sacraments to sense succeed:
Let nought be winning, nought be good
Which fails of Him to speak, and bleed
Once more with His all-cleansing blood!

AUBREY DE VERE

Domus Aurea

"THEY have no wine." At Heaven's high feast
That soft petition still hath place,
And bathes—so wills that kingly Priest
Whose "hour" *is* come—the worlds with grace.

AUBREY DE VERE

Mariæ Cliens

A LITTLE longer on the earth
That agèd creature's eyes repose
(Though half their light and all their mirth
Are gone); and then for ever close . . . .

Once more she hears the whispering rains
On flowers and paths her girlhood trod;
And of things present nought remains
Save the abiding sense of GOD.

Mary! make smooth her downward way!
Not dearer to the young thou art
Than her. Make glad her latest May;
And hold her, dying, on thy heart.

AUBREY DE VERE

Lumen Nuptiarum

SAY, who is she, serenely blest,
That walks the dustier ways of life
With foot immaculate as her breast?
That woman-maid, the Christian wife!

Her love, a full-blown rose, each hour
Its snowy bud regerminates;
The star of Eden lights her bower;
The angel, Reverence, guards its gates.

Yet half she is, that wife—still bride—
Owes to that Vestal never wed,
As homes through Him are sanctified
Who had not where to lay His head.

Both Mysteries sleep in one, secure:—
Like twins in one white cradle laid,
The life detached and marriage pure
One mother boast—the Mother-Maid.

AUBREY DE VERE

Vas Insigne Devotionis

WHO love thee prosper! As a breeze
Thou waft'st them o'er the ways divine:
Strange heights they reach with magic ease,
Through music-moulded discipline.

"If I but touch His vesture's hem,
I shall be healed, and strong and free"—
Thou wert His vesture, Mary!—them
His virtue heals that reach to thee.

AUBREY DE VERE

The Sixth Hour

THE SAVIOUR from the Cross they took:
Across His Mother's knee He lay:
O passers by! be still and look!
That Twain compose one cross for aye.

AUBREY DE VERE

Ancilla DOMINI

THE Crown of Creatures, first in place,
Was, of all creatures, creature most:
By nature nothing—all by grace;
Redemption's first and Loftiest Boast.

Handmaid of GOD in heart and will,
Without His life she seemed a death;
A void that He alone could fill,
A word suspended on His breath.

Yet—void and nothing—she in Him
The creature's sole perfection found:—
She was the great Rock's shadow dim;
She was the silence, not the sound.

On golden airs—by Him upheld—
She knelt, a soft subjection mute,
A hushed Dependence, tranced and spelled,
Still yearning towards the Absolute.

She was a sea-shell from the deep
Of GOD; her function this alone,
Of Him to whisper as in sleep
In everlasting undertone.

AUBREY DE VERE

This hour on Him her eyes are set!
And those who tread the earth she trod
Like her, themselves in her forget,
And her remember but in GOD.

AUBREY DE VERE

Mater Venerabilis

COME from the midnight mountain tops,
The mountains where the panthers play:
The vestal cowl of darkness drops;
Come, Fair, and Fairer than the Day!

Our hearts are wounded with thine eyes:
They stamp thereon in words of light
The mystery of the starry skies;
The "Name o'er every name" they write.

Come from the Lebanonian peaks,
Whose sacerdotal cedars nod
Above the world, when morning breaks—
The Mountain of the House of GOD. . .

AUBREY DE VERE

Regina Cœli

SAY, did his sisters wonder what could Joseph see
In a mild, silent little maid like thee?
And was it awful, in that narrow house,
With GOD for Babe and Spouse?
Nay, like thy simple, female sort, each one
Apt to find Him in husband and in son,
Nothing to thee came strange in this.
Thy wonder was but wondrous bliss:
Wondrous, for, though
True virgin lives not but does know
(Howbeit none ever yet confessed)
That GOD lies really in her breast,
Of thine He made His special nest!
And so
All mothers worship little feet,
And kiss the very ground they've trod;
But, ah, thy little Baby sweet,
Who was indeed thy GOD!

COVENTRY PATMORE

The Child's Purchase

A PROLOGUE

AS a young child whose mother, for a jest,
To his own use a golden coin flings down,
Devises blithe how he may spend it best—
Or on a horse, a bride-cake or a crown—
Till wearied with his quest,
Nor liking altogether that nor this,
He gives it back for nothing but a kiss;
Endowed so I
With golden speech, my choice of toys to buy,
And scanning power and pleasure and renown,
Till each in turn, with looking at, looks vain,
For her mouth's bliss,
To her who gave it, give I it again.

Ah, Lady Elect,
Whom the time's scorn has saved from its respect,
Would I had art
For uttering this which sings within my heart!
But, lo!
Thee to admire is all the art I know.
My Mother and GOD'S; Fountain of Miracle!
Give me thereby some praise of thee to tell
In such a song
As may my Guide severe and glad, not wrong,

Who never spake till thou'dst on him conferred
The right, convincing word!
Grant me the steady heat
Of thought, wise, splendid, sweet,
Urged by the great rejoicing wind that rings
With draught of unseen wings,
Making each phrase, for love and for delight,
Twinkle like Sirius on a frosty night!
Aid thou thine own dear fame, thou Only Fair,
At whose petition meek
The Heavens themselves decree that, as it were,
They will be weak!
Ora pro me!

Thou Speaker of all Wisdom in a Word,
Thy LORD!
Speaker who thus could'st well afford
Thence to be silent;—ah, what silence that
Which had for prologue thy "Magnificat"!
O silence full of wonders
More than by Moses in the Mount were heard,
More than were uttered by the Seven Thunders!
Silence that crowns, unnoted like the voiceless blue,
The loud world's varying view,
And in its holy heart the sense of all things ponders!
That acceptably I may speak of thee,
Ora pro me!

Key-note and Stop
Of the thunder-going chorus of sky-powers!
Essential drop,
Distilled from worlds of sweetest-savoured flowers
To anoint with nuptial praise
The Head which for thy beauty doffed its rays,
And thee, in His exceeding glad descending, meant,
And man's new days
Made of His deed the adorning accident!
Vast Nothingness of Self, fair female Twin
Of Fullness, sucking all GOD'S glory in!
(Ah, Mistress mine,
To nothing I have added only sin,
And yet would shine.)
Ora pro me!

Life's Cradle and Death's Tomb!
To lie within whose womb,
There, with divine self-will, infatuate
Love-captive to the thing He did create,
Thy GOD did not abhor,
No more
Than man, in youth's high spousal-tide,
Abhors at last to touch
The strange lips of his long-procrastinating bride;
Nay, not the least imagined part as much!
Ora pro me!

MADONNA of the POETS

My Lady, yea, the Lady of my LORD,
Who didst the first descry
The burning secret of virginity,
We know with what reward!
Prism whereby
Alone we see
Heav'n's light in its triplicity;
Rainbow Complex
In bright distinction of all beams of sex,
Shining for aye
In the simultaneous sky,
To One, thy Husband, Father, Son and Brother,
Spouse blissful, Daughter, Sister, milk-sweet Mother,
Ora pro me!

Mildness, whom GOD obeys, obeying thyself,
Him in thy joyful saint, nigh lost to sight
In the great gulf
Of His own glory and thy neighbour light,
With whom thou wast as else with husband none
For perfect fruit of inmost amity;
Who felt for thee
Such rapture of refusal that no kiss
Ever sealed wedlock so conjoint with bliss;
And whose good singular eternally
'Tis now, with nameless peace and vehemence,
To enjoy thy married smile,
That mystery of innocence;
Ora pro me!

Sweet Girlhood without guile,
The Extreme of GOD'S Creative Energy;
Sunshiny Peak of Human Personality;
The world's sad aspirations' One Success;
Bright Blush, that sav'st our shame from shamelessness;
Chief Stone of Stumbling; Sign built in the way
To set the foolish everywhere a-bray;
Hem of GOD's robe, which all who touch are heal'd,
To which the outside many honour yield
With a reward and grace
Unguessed by the unwashed boor that hails Him to His face,
Spurning the safe, ingratiant courtesy
Of suing Him by thee. *Ora pro me!*

Creature of GOD rather the sole than first;
Knot of the cord
Which binds together all and all unto their LORD;
Suppliant Omnipotence; best to the worst;
Our only saviour from an abstract Christ;
And Egypt's brick-kilns, where the lost crowd plods,
Blaspheming its false gods;
Peace-beaming Star, by which shall come enticed,
Though nought thereof as yet they weet,
Unto thy Babe's small feet,
The mighty, wand'ring disemparadised,
Like Lucifer, because to thee
They will not bend the knee. *Ora pro me!*

Desire of Him whom all things else desire!
Bush aye with Him as He with thee on fire!
Neither in His great deed nor on His throne—
O folly of Love, the intense
Last culmination of Intelligence—
Him seemed it good that GOD should be alone!
Basking in unborn laughter of thy lips
Ere the world was, with absolute delight
His Infinite reposed in thy Finite;
Well matched: He, universal being's Spring,
And thou, in whom are gathered up the ends of everything!
Ora pro me!

In season due, on His sweet-fearful bed,
Rocked by an earthquake, curtained with eclipse,
Thou shar'd'st the rapture of the sharp spear's head,
And thy bliss pale
Wrought for our boon what Eve's did for our bale;
Thereafter holding a little thy soft breath,
Thou underwent'st the ceremony of death;
And now, Queen-Wife,
Sitt'st at the Right Hand of the LORD of Life,
Who, of all bounty, craves for only fee
The glory of hearing it besought with smiles by thee!
Ora pro me!

COVENTRY PATMORE

Mother! who leadst me still by unknown ways,
Giving the gifts I know not how to ask,
Bless thou the work
Which, done, redeems my many wasted days,
Makes white the murk,
And crowns the few which thou wilt not dispraise,
When clear my songs of ladies' graces rang,
And little guessed I 'twas of thee I sang!
Vainly, till now, my pray'rs would thee compel
To fire my verse with thy shy fame, too long
Shunning world-blazon of well-ponder'd song;
But doubtful smiles, at last, 'mid thy denials lurk,
From which I spell,
"Humility and greatness grace the task
Which he who does it deems impossible!"

COVENTRY PATMORE

The Mother Mary

MARY, to thee the heart was given
For infant hand to hold;
Thus clasping an eternal Heaven,
The great Earth in its fold.

He seized the world with tender might
By making thee His own;
Thee, Lowly Queen, whose heavenly height
Was to thyself unknown.

He came, all helpless, to thy power
For warmth, and love, and birth;
In thy embraces every hour
He grew into the Earth.

And thine the grief, O Mother High,
Which all thy sisters share,
Who keep the gate betwixt the sky
And this our lower air;

And unshared sorrows, gathering slow
New thoughts within thy heart,
Which through thee like a sword will go,
And make thee mourn apart.

For, if a woman bore a son
That was of Angel brood,
Who lifted wings ere day was done,
And soared from where he stood,

GEORGE MACDONALD

Strange grief would fill each mother-moan,
Wild longing, dim and sore:
"My child! my child! he is my own,
And yet is mine no more!"

So thou, O Mary, years on years,
From childbirth to the Cross,
Wast filled with yearnings, filled with fears,
Keen sense of love and loss.

His childish thoughts outsoared thy reach;
Even His tenderness
Had deeper springs than act or speech
Could unto thee express.

Strange pangs await thee, Mother mild!
A sorer travail-pain,
Before the spirit of thy Child
Is born in thee again.

And thou wilt still forebode and dread,
And lost be still thy fear,
Till form be gone, and, in its stead,
The very self appear.

For, when thy Son hath reached His goal,
And vanished from the Earth,
Soon shalt thou find Him in thy soul,
A second holier birth.

GEORGE MACDONALD

Ave

MOTHER of the Fair Delight,
Thou handmaid perfect in GOD'S sight,
Now sitting fourth beside the THREE,
Thyself a Woman-Trinity,
Being a Daughter born to GOD,
Mother of CHRIST from stall to rood,
And Wife unto the HOLY GHOST:—
O, when our need is uttermost,
Think that to such as Death may strike
Thou once wert sister, sisterlike!
Thou Headstone of Humanity,
Groundstone of the great Mystery,
Fashioned like us, yet more than we.

Mind'st thou not (when June's heavy breath
Warmed the long days in Nazareth,)
That ere thou didst go forth to give
Thy flowers some drink that they might live
One faint night more amid the sands?
Far off the trees were as pale wands
Against the fervid sky: the sea
Sighed further off eternally
As human sorrow sighs in sleep.

Then suddenly the awe grew deep,
As of a day to which all days
Were footsteps in GOD'S secret ways;
Until a folding sense, like prayer,
Which is, as GOD is, everywhere,
Gathered about thee; and a voice
Spake to thee without any noise,
Being of the silence:—"Hail!" it said,
"Thou that art highly favourèd;
The LORD is with thee here and now;
Blessed among all women thou!"

Ah! knew'st thou of the end, when first
That Babe was on thy bosom nursed?
Or when He tottered round thy knee,
Did thy great sorrow dawn on thee?
And through His boyhood, year by year,
Eating with Him the Passovèr,
Didst thou discern confusedly
That Holier Sacrament, when He,
The bitter cup about to quaff,
Should break the bread and eat thereof?—
Or came not yet the knowledge even,
Till on some day forecast in Heaven
His feet passed through thy door to press
Upon His Father's business?
Or still was GOD'S high secret kept?
Nay, but I think the whisper crept

Like growth through childhood. Work and play,
Things common to the course of day,
Awed thee with meanings, unfulfilled;
And all through girlhood, something stilled
Thy senses like the birth of light,
When thou hadst trimmed thy lamp at night
Or washed thy garments in the stream;
To whose white bed had come the dream
That He was thine, and thou wast His
Who feeds among the field-liliès.
O solemn shadow of the end
In that wise spirit long contained!
O awful end! and those unsaid
Long years when It was Finishèd!

Mind'st thou not (when the twilight gone
Left darkness in the house of John,)
Between the naked window-bars
That spacious vigil of the stars?
For thou, a watcher even as they
Wouldst rise from where throughout the day
Thou wroughtest raiment for His poor;
And, finding the fixed terms endure
Of day and night which never brought
Sounds of His coming chariot,
Wouldst lift through cloud-waste, unexplored,
Those eyes which said, "How long, O LORD?"
Then that disciple whom He loved,
Well heeding, haply would be moved

To ask thy blessing in His Name;
And that one thought in both, the same
Though silent, then would clasp ye round
To weep together—tears long bound,
Sick tears of patience, dumb and slow.
Yet, "Surely I come quickly";—so
He said, from life and death gone home.
Amen! even so, LORD JESUS, come!
But, O! what human tongue can speak
That day when Michael came* to break
From the tired spirit, like a veil,
Its covenant with Gabriel,
Endured at length unto the end?
What human thought can apprehend
That mystery of motherhood,
When thy Beloved at length renewed
The sweet communion severèd,
His Left Hand underneath thine head,
And His Right Hand embracing thee?
Lo! He was thine, and this is He!

Soul, is it Faith, or Love, or Hope,
That lets me see her standing up
Where the light of the Throne is bright?
Unto the left, unto the right,
The Cherubim, succinct, conjoint,
Float inward to a golden point,
And from between the Seraphim
The glory issues for a hymn.

* A Church legend of the Blessed Virgin's death.

MADONNA of the POETS

O Mary Mother, be not loth
To listen; thou whom the stars clothe,
Who seèst, and mayst not be seen!
Hear us at last, O Mary Queen!
Into our shadow bend thy face,
Bowing thee from the secret place,
O Mary Virgin, full of grace!

DANTE GABRIEL ROSSETTI

Mary's Girlhood

FOR A PICTURE

THIS is that blessed Mary, pre-elect
GOD'S Virgin. Gone is a great while, and she
Dwelt young in Nazareth of Galilee.
Unto GOD'S will she brought devout respect,
Profound simplicity of intellect,
And supreme patience. From her mother's knee,
Faithful and hopeful, wise in charity,
Strong in grave peace, in pity circumspect.

So held she through her girlhood; as it were
An Angel-watered lily, that near GOD
Grows, and is quiet. Till one dawn at home
She woke in her white bed, and had no fear
At all,—yet wept till sunshine, and felt awed:
Because the fullness of the time was come.

DANTE GABRIEL ROSSETTI

Mary Mother of Divine Grace Compared to the Air we Breathe

I SAY that we are wound
With mercy round and round
As if with air: the same
Is Mary, more by name.
She, Wild Web, Wondrous Robe,
Mantles the guilty globe,
Since GOD has let dispense
Her prayers His providence:
Nay, more than Almoner,
The sweet Alms' self is her,
And men are meant to share
Her life, as life does air.

If I have understood,
She holds high Motherhood
Towards all our ghostly good,
And plays in grace her part
About man's beating heart,
Laying, like air's fine flood,
The death-dance in his blood;
Yet no part but what will
Be CHRIST our SAVIOUR still.
Of her flesh He took flesh:
He does take, fresh and fresh,
Though much the mystery how,
Not flesh, but spirit now,

And wakes, O marvellous!
New Nazareths in us,
Where she shall yet conceive
Him, morning, noon and eve;
New Bethlems, and He born
There, evening, noon and morn.—
Bethlem or Nazareth,
Men here may draw like breath
More CHRIST, and baffle Death;
Who, born so, comes to be
New self, and nobler me
In each one, and each one
More makes, when all is done,
With GOD'S and Mary's Son. . .

Be thou, then, O thou dear
Mother, my atmosphere;
My happier world, wherein
To wend and meet no sin;
Above me, round me lie,
Fronting my froward eye
With sweet and scarless sky;
Stir in mine ears, speak there
Of GOD'S love, O Live Air,
Of Patience, Penance, Prayer:
World-mothering Air, Air Wild,
Wound with thee, in thee isled,
Fold home, fast hold thy child.

The Immaculate Conception

A DEW-DROP of the darkness born,
Wherein no shadow lies,
The blossom of a barren thorn,
Whereof no petal dies;
A rainbow beauty passion-free,
Wherewith was veiled Divinity.

REV. JOHN BANISTER TABB

The Annunciation

"FIAT !"—The flaming word
Flashed, as the brooding Bird
Uttered the doom far heard
Of Death and Night.

"Fiat ! "—A cloistered womb—
A sealed, untainted tomb—
Wakes to the birth and bloom
Of Life and Light.

REV. JOHN BANISTER TABB

The Assumption

NOR Bethlehem nor Nazareth
Apart from Mary's care,
Nor Heaven itself a home for Him,
Were not His Mother there.

REV. JOHN BANISTER TABB

A Lily of the Field

IN all his glory Solomon
Was never so arrayed;
Yet far more beautiful is one—
A Mother and a Maid—
Whose loveliness and lowliness
GOD stooped from highest Heaven to bless.

REV. JOHN BANISTER TABB

A Pair of Turtle-Doves
The Purification

"WHERE, woman, is thine offering—
The debt of law and love?"
"My Babe a tender nestling is,
And I the mother-dove."

REV. JOHN BANISTER TABB

The CHILD: to His Mother

HE brought a lily white,
That bowed its fragrant head
And blushed a rosy red
Before her fairer light.

He brought a rose; and lo!
The crimson blossom saw
Her beauty; and in awe
Became as white as snow.

REV. JOHN BANISTER TABB

The Song of the Man

"THE woman gave, and I did eat."
Whereof gave she?
"'Twas of the garden fruitage sweet—
A portion fair to see;
She plucked and ate, and I did eat,
And lost alike are we;
GOD saith,
Ye die the death!"

"The Woman gave, and I did eat."
Whereof gave she?
"'Twas of her womb a Burden sweet—
But sad, alas, to see;
She took and ate, and I did eat,
And saved alike are we;
GOD saith,
So dieth Death!"

REV. JOHN BANISTER TABB

Christmas

THE womb of Silence bears the Eternal Word,
And yet no sound is heard:
The womb of Mary, Virgin-undefiled,
Mothers the Heaven-born Child.

REV. JOHN BANISTER TABB

Stabat Mater

THE Star that in His splendour hid her own,
At CHRIST'S Nativity,
Abides—a widowed satellite—alone,
On tearful Calvary.

REV. JOHN BANISTER TABB

Stabat

WHY, O my GOD, hast Thou forsaken Me?
Not so My Mother; for behold and see,
She steadfast stands! O FATHER, shall it be
That *She* abides, when Thou forsakest me?

REV. JOHN BANISTER TABB

The Assumption

BEHOLD! the Mother bird
The Fledgeling's voice hath heard!
He calls anew,
"It was thy breast
That warmed the nest
From whence I flew.
Upon a loftier tree
Of life I wait for thee;
Rise, Mother-dove, and come,
Thy Fledgeling calls thee home!"

REV. JOHN BANISTER TABB

The Christmas Rose

I KNOW a Rose, full fair to see,
Within a Lady's bower:
It is the joy and pride of me,
This Rose-Marie,
And like none other flower.

May, June, July may boast to be
The time for lovely roses,
When maids and men, through Christentie,
From bush and tree
Cull buds to make them posies.

But mine doth follow other rule;
For well can I remember,
My Rose-Marie, at time of Yule,
When winds blow cool,
Bare Fruit in mid-December.

REV. GEORGE RATCLIFFE WOODWARD

The Household of Faith

'TIS Mary's lovely self that makes
The Household of the Faith a home,
With mother-love our love that wakes:
'Tis Mary's lovely self that makes—
The lovely truth upon me breaks,
While reading in the Sacred Tome*—
'Tis Mary's lovely self that makes
"The Household of the Faith" a home.

REV. JOHN FITZPATRICK

* Gal. vi, 10.

Advent Meditation

Rorate Cœli desuper, et nubes pluant Justum.
Aperiatur Terra, et germinet SALVATOREM.

NO sudden thing of glory and fear
Was the LORD'S coming; but the dear
Slow nature's days followed each other
To form the SAVIOUR from His Mother—
One of the children of the year.

The earth, the rain, received the trust—
The sun and dews, to frame the Just;
He drew His daily life from these,
According to His own decrees,
Who makes man from the fertile dust.

Sweet summer and the winter wild,
These brought Him forth, the Undefiled.
The happy springs renewed again
His daily bread, the growing grain,
The food and raiment of the Child.

ALICE MEYNELL

Our Lady in Shadow

MADONNA, Lady, whom with heavenly fear
I love—so children do their mother dear—
O, hear my prayer; my Lady, often stand
As now, not far, where shadows show your hand.
Your face I do not see: I see the night
Assumes your shape and shows your hand for white,
And sweetly know how, on your other side,
Another just as softly hangs allied.

HENRY PATMORE

Mater DEI

SHE looked to East, she looked to West;
Her eyes unfathomable, mild,
That saw both worlds, came home to rest,—
Home to her own sweet Child.
GOD'S golden head was at her breast.

What need to look o'er land and sea?
What could the winged ships bring to her?
What gold or gems of price might be,
Ivory or miniver,
Since GOD Himself lay on her knee?

What could th' intense blue heaven keep
To draw her eyes and thoughts so high?
All Heaven was where her Boy did leap,
Where her foot quietly
Went rocking the dear GOD asleep.

The Angel-folk fared up and down,
A Jacob's Ladder hung between
Her quiet chamber and GOD'S Town.
She saw unawed, serene;
Her GOD Himself played by her gown.

KATHERINE TYNAN HINKSON

The Visitation

SHE is come with tender speed
All to help a woman's need.

She hath brought that house within,
Folded up in leaves of green,

Rose of Sharon, that shall bud
To a Rose as red as blood.

Maid and Mother, turn with speed
To all women in their need.

Turn to all who travail sore,
Light and comfort in the door.

Bring thy Son with thee and rest
While their need is heaviest.

KATHERINE TYNAN HINKSON

Assumpta est Maria

MOTHER of CHRIST, and all men's Mother,
Where thou sittest the stars between,
Pluck His robe for His toiling brother,
Stricken with sin.

Yea, the strong desire of His passion;
Yea, the fruit of His mortal pain—
Intercede for thy mournful nation,
Mother of Men.

Intercede for thy mournful nation,
Toiling, stricken, seething beneath—
Yea, the strong desire of His passion
Bought with His death.

KATHERINE TYNAN HINKSON

Virgo Gloriosa, Mater Amantissima

VINES branching stilly
Shade the open door
In the house of Zion's Lily,
Cleanly and poor.
O brighter than wild laurel
The Babe bounds in her hand,—
The King who for apparel
Hath but a swaddling band,
And sees her heavenlier smiling
Than stars in His command!

Soon mystic changes
Part Him from her breast,
Yet there awhile He ranges
Gardens of rest;
Yea, she the first to ponder
Our ransom and recall,
Awhile may rock Him under
Her young curls' fall,
Against that only sinless
Love-loyal heart of all.

What shall inure Him
  Unto the deadly dream,
When the Tetrarch shall abjure Him,
  The thief blaspheme,
And scribe and soldier jostle
  About the shameful Tree,
And even an Apostle
  Demands to touch and see?—
But she hath kissed her Flower,
  Where the Wounds are to be.

LOUISE IMOGEN GUINEY

Assumpta Maria

"Thou need'st not sing new songs, but say the old."—Cowley

MORTALS, *that behold a Woman,*
Rising 'twixt the Moon and Sun;
Who am I the Heavens assume? an
All am I, and I am one.

Multitudinous ascend I,
Dreadful as a battle arrayed,
For I bear you whither tend I;
Ye are I: be undismayed!
I the Ark that for the graven
Tables of the Law was made;
Man's own heart was one, one Heaven,—
Both within my womb were laid.
For there Anteros with Eros
Heaven with man conjoinèd was,—
Twin-stone of the Law, *Ischyros,*
Agios Athanatos!

I the flesh-girt Paradises
Gardened by the Adam New,
Daintied o'er with sweet devices
Which He loveth, for He grew.
I the boundless strict Savannah
Which GOD'S leaping feet go through;
I, the Heaven whence the Manna,
Weary Israel, slid on you!

He the Anteros and Eros,
I the body, He the Cross;
He upbeareth me, *Ischyros*,
Agios Athanatos!

I am Daniel's Mystic Mountain,
Whence the mighty stone was rolled;
I am the Four Rivers' Fountain,
Watering Paradise of old;
Cloud down-raining the Just One am,
Danaë of the Shower of Gold;
I the Hostel of the Sun am;
He the Lamb, and I the Fold.
He the Anteros and Eros,
I the body, He the Cross;
He is fast to me, *Ischyros*,
Agios Athanatos!

I the Presence-hall where Angels
Do enwheel their placèd King—
Even my thoughts which, without change else,
Cyclic burn and cyclic sing.
To the hollow of Heaven transplanted,
I a breathing Eden spring,
Where with venom all outpanted
Lies the slimed Curse shrivelling.
For the brazen Serpent clear on
That old fangèd knowledge shone;
I to Wisdom rise, *Ischyron*,
Agion Athanaton!

See in highest Heaven pavilioned
  Now the Maiden Heaven rest,
The many-breasted sky out-millioned
  By the splendours of her vest.
Lo, the Ark this holy tide is
  The un-handmade Temple's guest,
And the dark Egyptian bride is
  Whitely to the Spouse-Heart prest!
He the Anteros and Eros,
  Nail me to Thee, sweetest Cross!
He is fast to me, *Ischyros,*
  Agios Athanatos! . . .

Then commanded and spake to me
  He who framed all things that be;
And my Maker entered through me,
  In my tent His rest took He.
Lo! He standeth, Spouse and Brother;
  I to Him, and He to me,
Who upraised me where my mother
  Fell, beneath the apple-tree.
Risen 'twixt Anteros and Eros,
  Blood and Water, Moon and Sun,
He upbears me, He *Ischyros,*
  I bear Him, the *Athanaton!*

Where is laid the LORD arisen?
  In the light we walk in gloom;
Though the Sun has burst his prison,
  We know not his biding-room.

Tell us where the LORD sojourneth,
For we find an empty tomb.
"Whence He sprung, there He returneth,
Mystic Sun,—the Virgin's Womb,"
Hidden Sun, His beams so near us,
Cloud empillared as He was
From of old, there He, *Ischyros*,
Waits our search, *Athanatos*.

. . . To my Bread myself the bread is,
And my Wine doth drink me: see,
His left hand beneath my head is,
His right hand embraceth me!
Sweetest Anteros and Eros,
Lo, her arms He leans across;
Death that we die not, stooped to rear us,
Thanatos Athanatos.

Who is She, in candid vesture,
Rushing up from out the brine?
Treading with resilient gesture
Air, and with that Cup divine?
She in us and we in her are,
Beating GODward: all that pine,
Lo, a wonder and a terror!
The Sun hath blushed the sea to Wine!
He the Anteros and Eros,
She the Bride and Spirit; for
Now the days of promise near us,
And the Sea shall be no more.

. . . . Camp of Angels! Well we even
Of this thing may doubtful be,—
If thou art assumed to Heaven,
Or is Heaven assumed to thee?
Consummatum. CHRIST the Promised,
Thy maiden realm is won, O Strong!
Since to such sweet Kingdom comest,
Remember me, poor Thief of Song!

Cadent fails the stars along:—
Mortals, that behold a Woman
Rising 'twixt the Moon and Sun;
Who am I the Heavens assume? an
All am I, and I am one.

FRANCIS THOMPSON

A Dead Astronomer: Father Perry, S.J.

STARRY amorist, starward gone,
Thou art—what thou didst gaze upon!
Passed through thy golden garden's bars,
Thou seest the Gardener of the stars.

She about whose moonèd brows
Seven stars make seven glows,
Seven lights for seven woes;
She, like thine own Galaxy,
All lustres in one purity:—
What saidst thou, Astronomer,
When thou did'st discover *Her?*
When thy hand its tube let fall,
Thou found'st the fairest star of all!

FRANCIS THOMPSON

Lines for a Drawing of "Our Lady of the Night"

THIS, could I paint my inward sight,
This were Our Lady of the Night:

She bears on her front's lucency
The starlight of her purity:

For as the white rays of that star
The union of all colours are,

She sums all virtues that may be
In her sweet light of purity.

The mantle which she holds on high
Is the great mantle of the sky.

Think, O sick toiler, when the night
Comes on thee, sad and infinite,

Think, sometimes, 'tis our own Lady
Spreads her blue mantle over thee,

And folds the earth, a wearied thing,
Beneath its gentle shadowing;

Then rest a little; and in sleep
Forget to weep, forget to weep!

FRANCIS THOMPSON

The Passion of Mary

O LADY MARY, thy bright crown
Is no mere crown of majesty;
For with the reflex of His own
Resplendent thorns CHRIST circled thee.

The red rose of this passion-tide
Doth take a deeper hue from thee,
In the five Wounds of JESUS dyed,
And in thy bleeding thoughts, Mary.

The soldier struck a triple stroke
That smote thy JESUS on the Tree;
He broke the Heart of hearts, and broke
The Saint's and Mother's hearts, in thee.

Thy Son went up the Angels' ways,
His passion ended; but, ah me!
Thou found'st the road of further days
A longer way of Calvary.

On the hard cross of hope deferred,
Thou hung'st in loving agony,
Until the mortal-dreaded word
Which chills our mirth, spake mirth to thee.

Anderson

FILIPPINO LIPPI

The Angel Death from this cold tomb
  Of life did roll the stone away;
And He thou barest in thy womb
  Caught thee at last into the day—
Before the living throne of whom
  The lights of heaven burning pray.

L'Envoy

O thou who dwellest in the day,
  Behold, I pace amidst the gloom:
Darkness is ever round my way
  With little space for sunbeam-room.

Yet Christian sadness is divine,
  Even as thy patient sadness was:
The salt tears in our life's dark wine
  Fell in it from the saving Cross.

Bitter the bread of our repast;
  Yet doth a sweet the bitter leaven:
Our sorrow is the shadow cast
  Around it by the light of Heaven.
O Light in light, shine down from Heaven.

FRANCIS THOMPSON

A Poet's Prayer

NOW, therefore, thou who bring'st the year to birth,
Who guid'st the bare and dabbled feet of May;
Sweet Stem to that Rose CHRIST, who from the Earth
Suck'st our poor prayers, conveying them to Him;
Be aidant, tender Lady, to my lay! . . .

FRANCIS THOMPSON

Hymn before Action

AH, Mary, pierced with sorrow,
Remember, reach, and save
The soul that comes to-morrow
Before the GOD that gave!
Since each was born of woman,
For each at utter need,—
True comrade and true foeman,
Madonna intercede!

RUDYARD KIPLING

GOD'S Mother
The Annunciation of Our Lady

A GARDEN bower in bower
Grew waiting for GOD'S hour:
Where no man ever trod,
This was the Gate of GOD.

The first bower was red—
Her lips which "welcome" said.
The second bower was blue—
Her eyes that let GOD through.

The third bower was white—
Her soul in GOD'S sight.
Three bowers of love
Won CHRIST from Heaven above.

LAURENCE HOUSMAN

The Fountain of Life
Conception of the Virgin Mary

THINE Earth, O LORD, is full of grief:
Thy Heaven is full of love:
Tell me what power it was in chief
Which drew Thee from above?

Where Love stands ever, all in all,
No entrance is for grief:
Say then how came to Thee the call
That won the world's relief.

Since nothing mortal grief may move
Wholly to cast out fear;
How came the marvel that pure Love
Could ever enter here?

Thou say'st, "This Law ordains relief
All other laws above,
That Earth cannot contain its grief,
Nor Heaven contain its Love:

"So from the grief which has to mount,
The Love which has to run,
There springs and spills a Living Fount,
Till Earth and Heaven be one."

LAURENCE HOUSMAN

Our Lady of the May

O FLOWER of Flowers, our Lady of the May!
Thou gavest us the World's one Light of Light:
Under the stars, amid the snows, He lay;
While Angels through the Galilean night
Sang glory and sang peace:
Nor doth their singing cease,
For thou their Queen and He their King sit crowned
Above the stars, above the bitter snows;
They chaunt to thee the Lily, Him the Rose,
With white Saints kneeling round.
Gone is cold night: thine now are spring and day:
Flower of Flowers, our Lady of the May!

O Flower of Flowers, our Lady of the May!
Thou gavest us the blessèd Christmas mirth:
And now, not snows, but blossoms, light thy way;
We give thee the fresh flower-time of the earth.
Those early flowers we bring,
Are angels of the spring,
Spirits of gracious rain and light and dew.
Nothing so like to thee the whole earth yields,
As these pure children of her vales and fields,
Bright beneath skies of blue.
Hail, Holy Queen! their fragrant breathings say,
O Flower of Flowers, our Lady of the May!

MADONNA of the POETS

O Flower of Flowers, our Lady of the May!
Breathe from GOD'S garden of eternal flowers
Blessing, when we thy little children pray:
Let thy soul's grace steal gently over ours.
Send on us dew and rain,
That we may bloom again,
Nor wither in the dry and parching dust.
Lift up our hearts, till with adoring eyes,
O Morning Star! we hail thee in the skies,
Star of our hope and trust!
Sweet Star, Sweet Flower, there bid thy beauty stay:
O Flower of Flowers, our Lady of the May!

O Flower of Flowers, our Lady of the May!
Thou leftest lilies rising from thy tomb:
They shone in stately and serene array,
Immaculate amid Death's house of gloom.
Ah, let thy graces be
Sown in our dark hearts! We
Would make our hearts gardens for thy dear care;
Watered from wells of Paradise, and sweet
With balm winds flowing from the Mercy-seat,
And full of heavenly air:
While music ever in thy praise should play,
O Flower of Flowers, our Lady of the May!

O Flower of Flowers, our Lady of the May!
Not only for ourselves we plead, GOD'S Flower!
Look on thy blinded children, who will stray,
Lost in this pleasant land, thy chosen Dower!

Send us a perfect spring:
Let faith arise and sing,
And England from her long, cold winter wake.
Mother of Mercy! turn upon her need
Thine eyes of mercy: be their spring indeed:
So shall thine Angels make
A starrier music, than our hearts can say,
O Flower of Flowers, our Lady of the May!

LIONEL JOHNSON

A Descant upon the Litany of Loretto

AH, Mother! whom with many names we name
By lore of love, which in our earthly tongue
Is all too poor, though rich love's heart of flame,
To sing thee as thou art, nor leave unsung
The greatest of the graces thou hast won,
Thy chiefest excellence!
Ivory Tower! Star of the Morning! Rose
Mystical! Tower of David! our Defence!
To thee our music flows,
Who makest music for us to thy Son.
So, when the shadows come,
Laden with all contrivances of fear,
Ah, Mary! lead us home,
Through fear, through fire:
To where with faithful companies we may hear
That perfect music, which the love of GOD,
Who this dark way once trod,
Creates among the imperishable choir.

LIONEL JOHNSON

THE INDEX PRAYERS AND NOTES

The Litany of Loretto
In Honour of the Blessed Virgin

KYRIE eleison.
KYRIE eleison.
CHRISTE eleison.
CHRISTE eleison.
KYRIE eleison.
KYRIE eleison.
CHRISTE audi nos.
CHRISTE exaudi nos.
PATER de cœlis DEUS,
  Miserere nobis.
FILI REDEMPTOR mundi DEUS,
  Miserere nobis.
SPIRITUS SANCTE DEUS,
  Miserere nobis.
SANCTA TRINITAS, UNUS DEUS,
  Miserere nobis.
Sancta Maria,
Sancta DEI Genitrix,
Sancta Virgo virginum,
  Ora pro nobis.
Mater CHRISTI,
Mater divinæ gratiæ,
Mater purissima,
  Ora pro nobis.

Mater castissima,
Mater inviolata,
Mater intemerata,
  Ora pro nobis.
Mater amabilis,
Mater admirabilis,
Mater boni consilii,
  Ora pro nobis.
Mater CREATORIS,
Mater SALVATORIS,
Virgo prudentissima,
  Ora pro nobis.
Virgo veneranda,
Virgo prædicanda,
Virgo potens,
  Ora pro nobis.
Virgo clemens,
Virgo fidelis,
Speculum justitiæ,
  Ora pro nobis.
Sedes sapientiæ,
Causa nostræ lætitiæ,
Vas spirituale,
  Ora pro nobis.
Vas honorabile,
Vas insigne devotionis,
Rosa mystica,
  Ora pro nobis.

Turris Davidica,
Turris eburnea,
Domus aurea,
Ora pro nobis.
Fœderis arca,
Janua cœli,
Stella matutina,
Ora pro nobis.
Salus infirmorum,
Refugium peccatorum,
Consolatrix afflictorum,
Ora pro nobis.
Auxilium Christianorum,
Regina Angelorum,
Regina Patriarcharum,
Ora pro nobis.
Regina Prophetarum,
Regina Apostolorum,
Regina Martyrum,
Ora pro nobis.
Regina Confessorum,
Regina Virginum,
Regina Sanctorum omnium,
Ora pro nobis.
Regina sine labe originali concepta,
Ora pro nobis.
Regina Sacratissimi Rosarii,
Ora pro nobis.

AGNUS DEI, qui tollis peccata mundi,
Parce nobis, DOMINE.
AGNUS DEI, qui tollis peccata mundi,
Exaudi nos, DOMINE.
AGNUS DEI, qui tollis peccata mundi,
Miserere nobis.

Ave Maria

AVE, Maria, gratia plena; DOMINUS tecum: benedicta tu in mulieribus, et benedictus fructus ventris tui, JESUS.

Sancta Maria, Mater DEI, ora pro nobis peccatoribus, nunc et in hora mortis nostræ. Amen.

Salve Regina

SALVE Regina, mater misericordiæ;
Vita, dulcedo, et spes nostra, salve.
Ad te clamamus, exules filii Hevæ;
Ad te suspiramus, gementes et flentes in hac lacrymarum valle.
Eia ergo, Advocata nostra,
Illos tuos misericordes oculos ad nos converte:
Et JESUM benedictum fructum ventris tui
Nobis post hoc exilium ostende,
O clemens, O pia, O dulcis Virgo Maria. Amen.

THE INDEX AND NOTES

THE INDEX AND NOTES

ANONYMOUS

To our Blessed LORD Page 1

Translated from the Ancient Greek "Menæa" by the Rev. George Ratcliffe Woodward.

ANONYMOUS

The Mother of GOD 2

From the Greek Service Book, "The Great Horologion." Translated by the Rev. George Ratcliffe Woodward.

MAUROPUS, JOHN (died 1060)

Our Lady of the Passion 3

Translated from the Greek by Elizabeth Barrett Browning for her Essay "The Christian Poets."

GROSSETESTE, ROBERT (1175?-1253)

A Little Song 4

From the Publications of the Percy Society, 1849; translated by William de Shoreham; modernized by F. M. Capes; quoted in Orby Shipley's "Carmina Mariana," Second Series.

MADONNA of the POETS

VON STRASBURG, GOTTFRIED
(Circa 1210)

To Mary 6

Translated from the German by Elinor Mary Sweetman, quoted in "Carmina Mariana."

BENEDETTI, GIACOMO de (Jacopone da Todi) (died 1306)

Stabat Mater 8

From "Poems and Translations" by Philip Stanhope Worsley.

ANONYMOUS (Reign of Henry VI)

Carol 11

From Wright's "Songs and Carols," Warton Society. Quoted in "A Christmas Garland," edited by Arthur Henry Bullen.

ANONYMOUS (Fifteenth Century)

Quia Amore Langueo 12

From the Publications of the Early English Text Society, edited from the Lambeth MSS. by Frederick James Furnivall, and modernized by Ellen Mary Clerke; quoted in "Carmina Mariana."

THE INDEX

ANONYMOUS

The Seven Joys of Mary 15
The Virgin and Child 18

From "Carols New and Old," edited by Henry Ramsden Bramley. (Novello, Ewer and Co.)

ANONYMOUS (Fifteenth Century)

The Seven Virgins 21

From "A Garland of Christmas Carols," edited by Joshua Sylvester.

FORREST, WILLIAM (1505 ——)

De Assumptione 23

From Harleian MS. of the British Museum Library, edited by Frederick George Lee; quoted in "Carmina Mariana."

SOUTHWELL, ROBERT(1560-1595)

The Virgin's Salutation 26

From "Mænoniæ."

ROWLANDS, RICHARD (Verstegen) (1565-1630?)

Our Blessed Lady's Lullaby 27

From "Odes in Imitation of the Seven Penitential Psalms, with sundry other Ditties tending to Devotion and Piety."

MADONNA of the POETS

DONNE, JOHN (1573-1637)

The Virgin Mary 33

From "A Litany."

Annunciation 34

From "La Corona."

JONSON, BEN (1573-1637)

Daughter, Mother, Spouse of God 35

Part of "The Garland of the Blessed Virgin Mary," a poem prefixed to Anthony Stafford's "Femall Glory, or The Life and Death of our Blessed Lady," edited by Orby Shipley.

BEAUMONT, SIR JOHN (1582-1628)

The Assumption 37

This poem, cancelled from the author's works in 1629, was discovered and identified in 1890 in a small volume of verse amongst the Stowe Collection of MSS., formerly in the Ashburnham Library, by Frederick George Kenyon. Quoted in "Carmina Mariana," First Series.

HERRICK, ROBERT (1591-1674)

The Virgin Mary 38

From "Noble Numbers."

THE INDEX

HERBERT, GEORGE (1593-1632)

Anagram 38

From "The Temple"

CRASHAW, RICHARD (1616-1650)

"O Gloriosa Domina" 39

Sancta Maria Dolorum 41

From "Carmen Deo Nostro."

On the Blessed Virgin's Bashfulness 46

On the Glorious Assumption 47

From "Steps to the Temple."

VAUGHAN, HENRY (1622-1695)

The Knot 50

From "Silex Scintillans."

ANONYMOUS (1687)

Stabat Mater Dolorosa 51

From Griffith, Farran, Okeden and Welsh's "Hymns from the Primers, 1599-1706," published in "Christ's Victory and Triumph," in their Ancient and Modern Library of Theological Literature.

REEVE, JOSEPH (1733-1820)

Reunion of the Soul and Body of the Blessed Virgin Mary 54

Written in Latin, translated by J. Cumberlege, copied from the Rawlinson MSS. in the Bodleian Library by Orby Shipley, and quoted in his "Carmina Mariana," Second Series. It has been identified by Joseph Gillow as the work of Father Reeve of the Society of JESUS.

WORDSWORTH, WILLIAM (1770-1850)

The Virgin 58

From "Ecclesiastical Sketches."

NEWMAN, JOHN HENRY (1801-1890)

Candlemas 59

From "Verses on Various Occasions"

HAWKER, ROBERT STEPHEN (1804-1875)

King Arthur's Waes-Hael 60

The rounded shape of the bowl for Waes-hael was intended to recall the image of a mother's breast; and thus it was meant, with a touching simplicity, to blend the thought of our Christmas gladness with the earliest nature of the Child JESUS.—AUTHOR'S NOTE.

THE INDEX

A Canticle for Christmas 61
Aishah Schechinah 62

From "Poetical Works" (Kegan Paul and Co.)

Schechinah.—This, the cloudly sheath of the Presence, is the most majestic symbol of our Lady throughout the Oracles. The element of Schechinah, which I have named "Numyne," was called by the Rabbins, "Mater et Filia DEI," and was always a feminine noun. They say it was a stately pillar, or column of soft and fleecy cloud, which took, ever and anon, as to Elias upon Carmel, the outline of a human form, "Vestigium Hominis." Within its breast sojourned the Glory of the Presence, as in a tent.

Therefore I claim, with all reverence, to use the title, "Aishah Schechinah!" The sound of this latter word is a dactyl.

Aishah, the Native Name of Woman.—This was the happy name of Eve in the days of her innocence. When she stood before Adam in her blameless beauty, he said, being inspired, "She shall be called Aishah," that is to say, man's, or man's own, because she is taken out of Aish, "Man." It was afterwards, when she had shuddered into sin, that the man called the name of his wife Eve.

Now, the household word for the sinless Mother, in the cottage of Nazareth, and on the lips of her

Son, was also Aishah! It was in memory of the former phrase of Eden: a sound of mingled endearment and respect.

It was not, in that native language, as it is in our own mean and meagre speech, a mere appellative of sex, "woman," but Aishah! the tender and the graphic title of the Swain: the Bride of the Garden, Man's own, all innocent: and of Mary, Maiden-Mother of GOD. So at Cana, and on Calvary, JESUS made use of that only name, Aishah!

At the marriage, when, with her woman's zeal for the honour of the feast, the Mother made haste to her Son, and said suddenly, "They have no wine!" JESUS answered, and with the long-accustomed smile, "What have we, Aishah?" He said, in the exact letter, "What is to Me, and to thee, Aishah?" He signified, with a very usual idiom, "What have I, and what hast thou, Aishah?"

He meant, in the spirit of His voice and smile, "What have we not, Aishah? Are not all things under our feet? Mine Hour—the Hour that thou wottest of—is not yet come; but still—"; and the well-known look of Nazareth and home revealed the rest; so she turned to the servants and said, "Whatsoever He shall say unto you, do!"—AUTHOR'S NOTE.

DE VERE, AUBREY (1814-1902)

Dei Genitrix 64
Beati qui Audiunt Verbum Dei 65
Mater Divinæ Gratiæ 66
Domus Aurea 67
Mariæ Cliens 67
Lumen Nuptiarum 68
Vas Insigne Devotionis 69
The Sixth Hour 69
Ancilla Domini 70
Mater Venerabilis 71

From "May Carols" (Burns and Oates).

PATMORE, COVENTRY (1823-1896)

Regina Cœli 72

From "Amelia."

The Child's Purchase 73

From "The Unknown Eros" (by permission of Mrs Patmore).

MACDONALD, GEORGE (1824-1905)

Mother Mary 80

From "The Gospel Women" (Chatto and Windus).

ROSSETTI, DANTE GABRIEL (1828-1882)

Ave 82
Mary's Girlhood 87

From "Poems," Ellis and Elvey (by permission of W. M. Rossetti).

HOPKINS, GERARD (1844-1889)

Mary, Mother of Divine Grace 88

Quoted in "A Book of Christmas Verse," edited by Rev. Henry Charles Beeching (by permission of Mrs Hopkins).

TABB, REV. JOHN BANISTER

The Immaculate Conception 90
The Annunciation 90
The Assumption 91

From "Poems" (John Lane).

A Lily of the Field 91
A Pair of Turtle-Doves 92
The CHILD: to His Mother 92

From "Child Verse."

The Song of the Man 93
Christmas 94
Stabat Mater 94

From "Lyrics" (John Lane.)

Stabat 94
The Assumption 95
From "Later Lyrics" (John Lane).

WOODWARD, REV. GEORGE RATCLIFFE
The Christmas Rose 96
Song suggested by the line "Ich Weiss Ein Roslein" in a poem by Johann Schütz of Straubing (1537?-1580?).

FITZPATRICK, REV. JOHN
The Household of Faith 97
From "Virgo Prædicanda."

MEYNELL, ALICE
Advent Meditation 98
From "Poems" (John Lane).

PATMORE, HENRY (1860-1883)
Our Lady in Shadow 99
From "Poems" (by permission of Mrs Patmore).

HINKSON, KATHERINE TYNAN

Mater Dei 100
From "Many Moods" (Lawrence and Bullen).

The Visitation 101
From "Six Miracle Plays" (John Lane).

Assumpta est Maria 102

GUINEY, LOUISE IMOGEN

Virgo Gloriosa 103
From "The Martyr's Idyll" (Houghton, Mifflin Co., Boston, U.S.A.)

THOMPSON, FRANCIS

Assumpta Maria 105

A Dead Astronomer 110
From "New Poems" (John Lane).

Lines for a Drawing of "Our Lady of the Night" 111
From "The Ushaw Magazine," 1890.

The Passion of Mary 112
From "Merry England," 1888.

A Poet's Prayer 114
From "Sister Songs" (John Lane).

THE INDEX

KIPLING, RUDYARD

Hymn before Action 114

A verse from "Hymn before Action," in "The Seven Seas" (Methuen).

HOUSMAN, LAURENCE

God's Mother 115

The Fountain of Life 116

From "Spikenard" (Grant Richards).

JOHNSON, LIONEL (1867-1902)

Our Lady of the May 117

A Descant upon the Litany of Loretto (Fragment) 120

From "Ireland: With Other Poems" (Elkin Mathews).

PRAYERS

The Litany of Loretto 121

Ave, Maria 124

Salve, Regina 124